

Supporting our Unpaid Carers

Renfrewshire IJB's
Unpaid Adult Carers' Strategy 2022-25



Renfrewshire
Health & Social Care
Partnership

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Introduction

Background to this Strategy

This is Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board's (IJB) third Unpaid Adult Carers' Strategy since it was established in 2016.

This strategy reaffirms the value we place on unpaid carers and the contribution they make to the wider community of Renfrewshire. It will set out our commitment to unpaid carers, by prioritising a preventive approach to supporting them.

Our aim is to help them to remain in their caring roles and to manage their own life alongside their caring responsibilities.

Our most recent strategy for unpaid carers covered the period from 2020-2022. At the time, our strategy identified a range of priority areas to deliver upon, alongside our partners.

However, for over half the duration of our previous strategy, the IJB and wider society have been responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has had a significant impact on everyone's lives. In many areas, we have worked flexibly to refocus our priorities and adapt to the needs of the rapidly changing environment. More recently, the cost-of-living crisis and other factors are also placing greater strain on unpaid carers.

In developing our new strategy for the next three years, we have started by considering the priorities from our most recent strategy and tested them within the current environment to understand if they remain the most important priorities for unpaid carers.

We have consulted with carers with lived experience, to ensure the strategy has undergone meaningful engagement with those who know what it is like to devote a significant proportion of their time to caring for a loved one or friend. We have also worked with our staff, carer organisations and a range of delivery partners to make sure those who have responsibilities to support carers have had the chance to shape this strategy.

Key areas that were considered as part of this review were:

- Consultation feedback from carers, staff and partners
- Review of most recent demographics
- The impact of COVID and new challenges such as the cost-of-living crisis
- Key Performance
- New Legislation and Policy
- What is changing from the previous strategy to reflect the current context

This refreshed strategy reflects the feedback we have received throughout this process and outlines what we believe must change. We would like to thank everyone involved in developing this strategy. Only by working together can we realise our vision for carers:

Our Carers Vision - Renfrewshire is a caring place where unpaid carers are supported to live well and continue to care in good health.

About this Strategy

How we Consulted on the Strategy

An overview of the engagement we have undertaken:



Our Unpaid Adult Carers' Strategy on a Page

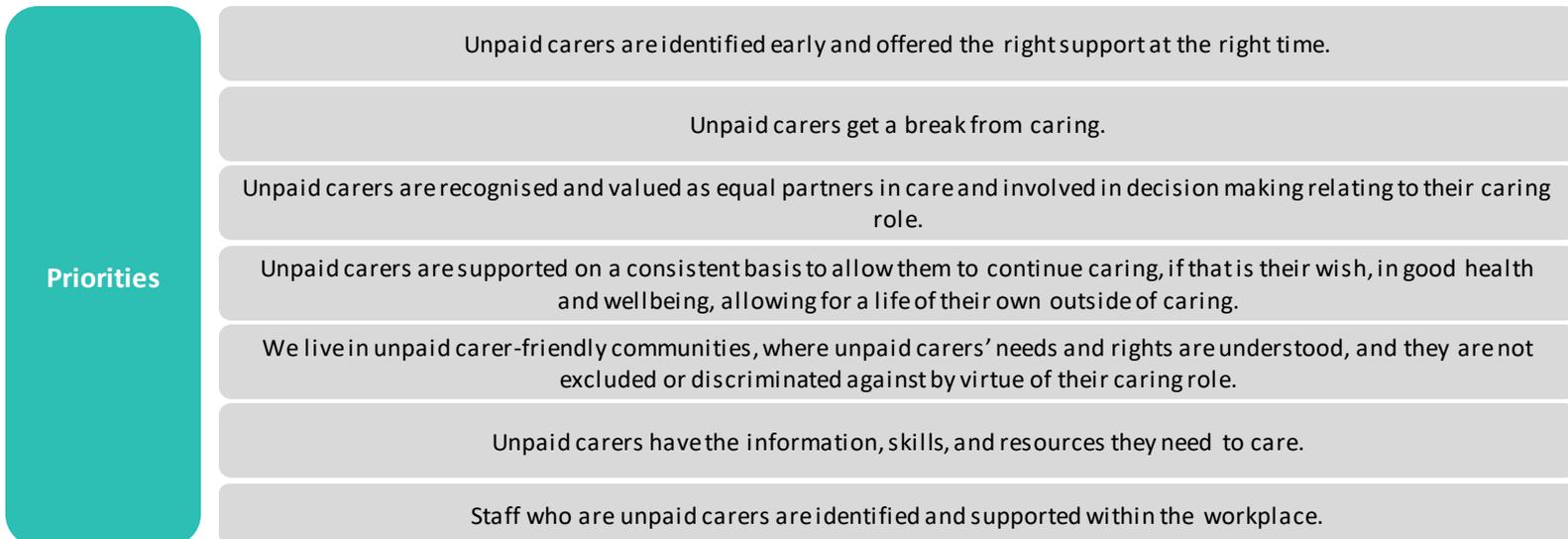
How the Elements of our Strategy fit Together



Renfrewshire IJB Strategic Plan 2022-25 - Strategic Themes



Renfrewshire IJB Unpaid Adult Carers' Strategy 2022-25





The Strategic Context

The Strategic Context

National and Local Policies and Strategies

The national and local context for health and social care is increasingly complex and continues to evolve. As a result, our strategy will not be delivered in isolation, but will need to reflect and interact with each of these policies and strategies. We provide an indicative, but not exhaustive, view of this context below. Our strategy is a live document and will continue to be shaped by these policies and strategies and be refined to reflect new developments.

National Context

Legislation and Policy

- Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968
- Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002
- Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013
- Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014
- Carers (Scotland) Act 2016
- Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018
- National Care Service (Scotland) Bill 2022

Local Context

Plans and Strategies

- Renfrewshire IJB Strategic Plan 2022-25
- Renfrewshire IJB Workforce Plan 2022-25
- Renfrewshire Young Carers' Strategy
- Renfrewshire Council Plan 2017-22
- NHSGGC Public Health Strategy 2018-2028

National Health and Wellbeing Outcome 6

People who provide unpaid care are supported to look after their own health and wellbeing, including to reduce any negative impact of their caring role on their own health and well-being.

The Strategic Context

Carers (Scotland) Act

Definition of a Carer

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 defines a carer as "an individual who provides or intends to provide care for another individual".

An adult carer is aged 18 or over.

This strategy uses the term unpaid adult carer to distinguish from paid care staff.

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 came into force on 1 April 2018. It aims to support unpaid carers' health and wellbeing, helping them to remain in their caring roles and to manage their own life, alongside their caring responsibilities.

Renfrewshire IJB implemented all relevant duties by the commencement date in April 2018.

The Unpaid Adult Carers Planning Group continues to monitor the implementation of the Act and new developments such as 'The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 (Adult Carers and Young Carers of Terminally Ill Persons: Timescales for Adult Carer Support Plans and Young Carer Statements etc.) Regulations 2021', which came into force in July 2021.

The Government provides funding to implement the duties in the Carers Act. At its meeting on 26 January 2018, the IJB agreed to ring-fence Renfrewshire's local allocation of the Scottish Government's funding solely to fulfil its new duties and provisions under the new Carers Act. The funding is used for a range of support including:

- Commissioning Renfrewshire Carers Centre.
- Funding a post to support the HSCP's partnership with the Carers Centre and co-ordinate the HSCP'S unpaid carers' agenda.
- Respite, care packages and replacement care where additional support is required to keep the cared-for person in the community, including increasing Self-Directed Support (SDS) budgets where appropriate to facilitate this.
- Awareness raising training for staff.



Carers (Scotland) Act 2016
Supporting Carers

The Strategic Context

The Independent Review of Adult Social Care and the National Care Service

The Independent Review of Adult Social Care, and the subsequent consultation on proposals to create a National Care Service, were created in response to the pandemic.

Following the consultation, the Scottish Government introduced the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill to Parliament on 20 June 2022.

The Bill committed Scotland to establishing a functioning National Care Service by the end of 2026.

It includes a section on the 'rights to breaks for carers', which amends the Carers Act and aims to ensure that unpaid carers get the support they need to take 'sufficient' breaks. Being able to take 'sufficient' breaks will also be an identified personal outcome of every unpaid carer.

The 'rights to breaks for carers' provision can be introduced prior to the National Care Service, and ahead of its introduction. The IJB will continue to work with our partners to develop new and innovative ways to give unpaid carers a break from their caring role.

The extent and nature of the National Care Service is still being developed, so there remains a lot of uncertainty. However, the Independent Review and consultation also set out a broad principle for the future of support for unpaid carers, which in our view all stakeholders will support and wish to progress.

“We need to support and enable unpaid carers to continue to be a cornerstone of social care support. The contribution they make is invaluable. Their commitment and compassion is humbling. We need to provide them with a stronger voice and with the networks, support and (breaks) they need to continue in their vital role.”

Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland

The Strategic Context

Scotland's Unpaid Carers



759,000
unpaid carers aged 16+*

Source: Scotland's Carers



41%
have one or
more long-term
health conditions*



4%
have a mental
health condition*



12%
are retired*



27%
provide 50+
hours of
unpaid care*



59%
are female*



28%
said they do not
feel supported to
continue caring

Source: Health and Care Experience Survey 2021/22

*Source: Scotland's Carers

The Strategic Context

Renfrewshire's Unpaid Carer Population



17,760

Renfrewshire's unpaid carer population

Source: Scotland's Census 2011



19%

aged 65 and over

Source: Scotland's Census 2011



963

new unpaid carers Supported 2021/22

Source: Renfrewshire HSCP/Carers Centre



59%

have a good balance between caring and other things in their life

Source: Health and Care Experience Survey 2021/22



63%

provide 100+ hours of unpaid care

Source: Renfrewshire HSCP



2,695

received Carers Allowance Supplement in October 2021

Source: Scottish Government



95%

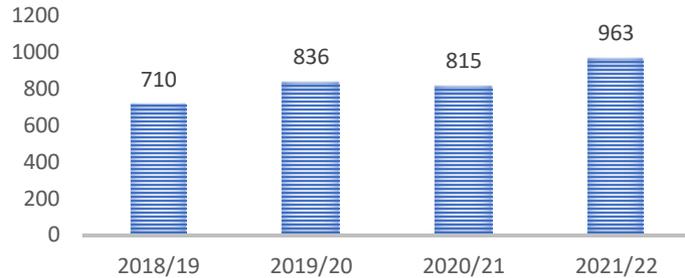
mental health and wellbeing impacted by the pandemic

Source: Renfrewshire Carers Centre Survey 2020

The Strategic Context

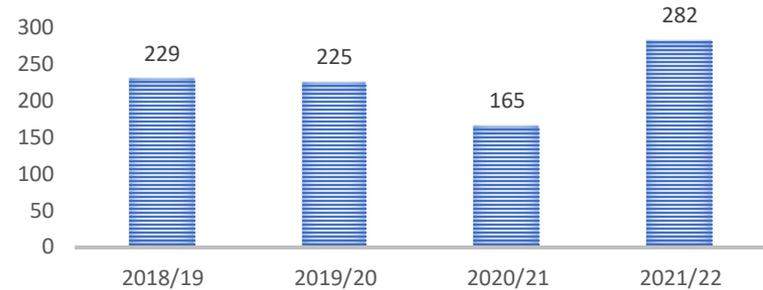
Key Performance Summary

NEW UNPAID CARERS SUPPORTED



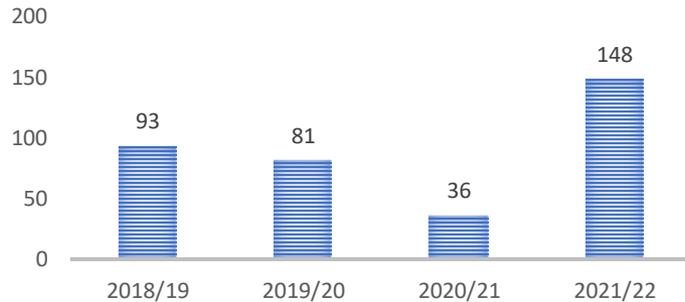
2021/22 saw the highest number of new unpaid carers to the Carers Centre since we began recording this data.

UNPAID CARERS ATTENDING TRAINING



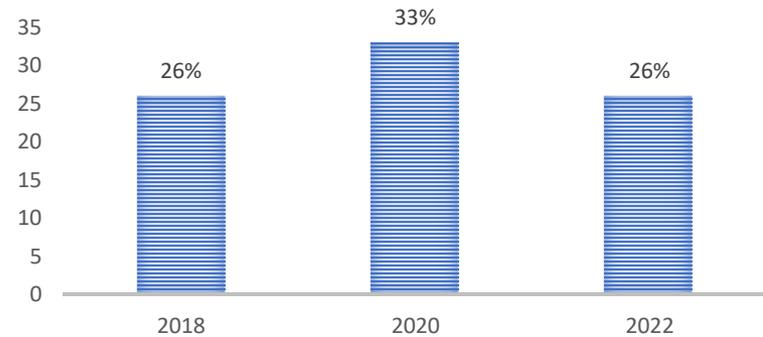
2021/22 saw the highest number of unpaid carers attending Carers Centre training, since we began recording this data.

ADULT CARER SUPPORT PLANS COMPLETED



2021/22 saw an increase in the number of ACSP's completed following an expected decrease during the pandemic.

I FEEL SUPPORTED TO CONTINUE CARING



2022 saw a decrease in the number of unpaid carers who feel supported to continue caring (Health and Care Experience Survey 2022).

The Strategic Context

The Impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 continues to have an unprecedented impact on every aspect of life. Local and national research has highlighted the impact on unpaid carers.

The HSCP, along with our partners across the health and social care system, and in the voluntary sector, implemented new service pathways and ways of delivering services in response to the pandemic. This included working with the Carers Centre to move all support online to ensure that unpaid carers continued to receive the support they needed as well as making sure unpaid carers had access to the technology they needed.

Carers Centre Survey During COVID

- 95% said their emotional health & wellbeing was affected
- 78% had an increased caring role of 50+ hours per week
- 65% were concerned about what would happen to the cared for person if they became ill
- 45% said their caring role had increased due to local services being paused
- 47% had been impacted financially.

Supporting Carers During COVID

In April 2020, the Government published guidance setting out the process for unpaid carers to access PPE. The HSCP worked with the Carers Centre to implement an ordering and delivery process for carers in Renfrewshire.

We also continued to ensure unpaid carers could access the support they needed by moving support online and changing the way we engaged with and identified what support they needed.

The Strategic Context

Key Feedback from the consultation process

A consensus of the feedback told us that refreshing the previous strategy was the right approach to take. It also highlighted that the priorities were the right ones, although exacerbated by COVID and the cost-of-living crisis. We also heard throughout the consultation that identifying unpaid carers was key to supporting them and that is why identifying unpaid carers will once again be our core priority.

Several emerging points came to light in the consultation. These are summarised below and are reflected in the priorities section.

Unpaid carers need continued support with the cost-of-living-crisis, including support to get the benefits they are entitled to, and support to get access to emergency grants, when available.

Supporting the cared-for person should be a partnership between unpaid carers and professionals.

Unpaid carers should be recognised, valued and treated with the dignity they deserve.

The pandemic has shown that providing the option of in person and online support works well for unpaid carers. However, unpaid carers should be able to develop their digital skills to ensure they are confident online.

Unpaid carers should be able to have a life alongside their caring role, and be supported to get access to further education, training and employment. They would be interested in getting a recognised qualification in health and social care, to help with sector workforce challenges.

Many unpaid carers said that traditional forms of breaks do not meet their needs. They also do not meet the needs of the cared-for person. The HSCP and its partners should explore innovative ways of providing unpaid carers with a break.

Staff and managers said they need more information about the support available to unpaid carers in the community and for staff who are unpaid carers.

Unpaid carers said there was a need for better communication when the cared-for person was in hospital. Staff and managers also echoed the need for improved communication between HSCP and Hospital staff.

Staff and unpaid carers believe that unpaid carers should have choice and control over personalised support that meets their needs.



Supporting Carers Through
our IJB Strategic Plan

Renfrewshire IJB Strategic Plan 2022-25

Supporting Carers through our IJB Strategic Plan

The Renfrewshire IJB Strategic Plan 2022-25 was approved by the Integration Joint Board in March 2022.

The plan sets out how services will be shaped around individuals, unpaid carers, and communities to support everyone in Renfrewshire to live meaningful lives and achieve their hopes and aspirations. The plan has a focus on delivering within five key themes. The table below sets out how the strategy's vision links with them.

The Unpaid Adult Carers Planning Group contributed to the development of the Strategic Plan and developed the Unpaid Adult Carers Strategy's Priorities.

	Strategic Plan Themes	Unpaid Adult Carers Strategy Priorities
 <p>Healthier futures</p>	<p>People experience reduced inequalities and improved health and wellbeing through early action and prevention of more complex need.</p>	<p>Unpaid carers are identified early and offered the right support at the right time</p>
 <p>Connected futures</p>	<p>People are supported to recover, or manage disabilities and long-term conditions, and to live as safely and independently in their own home or community as possible.</p>	<p>Unpaid carers are supported on a consistent basis to allow them to continue caring, if that is their wish, in good health and wellbeing, allowing for a life of their own outside of caring.</p> <p>Unpaid carers get a break from caring.</p>
 <p>Enabled futures</p>	<p>Our services are clinically safe, and people have access to the appropriate specialist support to aid them in their recovery and rehabilitation, where possible.</p>	<p>Unpaid carers have the information, skills, and resources they need to care.</p>
 <p>Empowered futures</p>	<p>People access the right care at the right time and place and are empowered to shape their support at every stage of life.</p>	<p>Unpaid carers are recognised and valued as equal partners in care and involved in decision making relating to their caring role.</p>
 <p>Sustainable futures</p>	<p>We maximise the impact of our people and resources by working collaboratively across sectors to deliver integrated services.</p>	<p>We live in unpaid carer-friendly communities, where unpaid carers' needs and rights are understood, and they are not excluded or discriminated against by virtue of their caring role</p> <p>Staff who are unpaid carers are identified and supported within the workplace</p>



Our Priorities

Unpaid Adult Carers Strategy Priorities

Focusing our activity on priorities which reflect our support to unpaid carers

1.

Unpaid carers are identified early and offered the right support at the right time.

2.

Unpaid carers get a break from caring.

3.

Unpaid carers are recognised and valued as equal partners in care and involved in decision making relating to their caring role.

4.

Unpaid carers are supported on a consistent basis to allow them to continue caring, if that is their wish, in good health and wellbeing, allowing for a life of their own outside of caring.

5.

We live in unpaid carer-friendly communities, where unpaid carers' needs and rights are understood, and they are not excluded or discriminated against by virtue of their caring role.

6.

Unpaid carers have the information, skills, and resources they need to care.

7.

Staff who are unpaid carers are identified and supported within the workplace.

Priority 1

Unpaid Carers are identified early and offered the right support at the right time.

Most unpaid carers take years to recognise their role, missing out on crucial financial, practical, and emotional support. When not receiving support at an early stage, the negative impacts of caring are intensified with many unpaid carers missing out on benefits and entitlements, and others forced to give up work altogether, with a significant long-term effect on personal and family finances. A lack of practical help can have a huge impact on health and wellbeing, from long-term physical health effects such as back pain, to mental ill health and social isolation because of caring without a supportive network. The longer it takes to identify as an unpaid carer, the more likely it is that unpaid carers will struggle without the support and advice they need.

By identifying unpaid carers earlier, we can provide support to ensure they remain healthy, but also to help prevent a breakdown of the caring role.

We recognise the need to refresh our approach to service provision and strategic commissioning. This includes identifying and supporting more unpaid carers, including those identified as 'hard to reach', such as Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities, Gypsy, Travellers, and people with a head injury, mental health, drug, or alcohol issues. We will work with our partners to develop a co-ordinated approach to identifying and supporting all unpaid carers across Renfrewshire.



In 2021 / 22, 963 new unpaid carers were supported via the Carers Centre - the highest number of new carers identified and asking for support since we started reporting this information.

38% had accessed support first by themselves, 19% were helped by a Social Care Professional, 19% were helped by Renfrewshire Carers Centre, 5% were helped by a Health Professional, 5% were helped by Family.

Delivering on Priority 1

Unpaid Carers are identified early and offered the right support at the right time.

High-Level Priority Activity	Outcome	Measure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and deliver a programme of unpaid carer awareness and engagement sessions, to our services, acute and community health partners, the voluntary sector, and communities • Run campaigns targeting communities of unpaid carers less well known to us. • Increase the number of Adult Carer Support Plans being offered and completed. • Review, and where appropriate, update the self-referral process, ensuring it is user-friendly. • Run regular roadshows in community settings to target unpaid carers. 	<p>Unpaid Carers are supported to continue to care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new unpaid carers. • Number of ACSPs offered and completed. • Unpaid carers saying they feel supported to continue to care.

Supporting Our Staff to Identify and Support Unpaid Carers

HSCP staff have a crucial role in identifying unpaid carers. Identifying an unpaid carer could happen in many settings, but for staff this is most likely when engaging with a service user. Many service users will have someone with them when they need support. This provides an opportunity for our staff to recognise an unpaid carer and to sensitively make them aware of their role, and to signpost them to information and sources of support they can access.

What HSCP staff said

"Asking a series of questions which identifies if a service user is a carer would be better, as sometimes, they don't realise"

"Provide carer packs, which have information on rights, financial supports, available services"

"Provide training for staff and managers so they have more of an understanding of what it is like to be an unpaid carer"

Priority 2

Unpaid carers get a break from caring

A short break is any form of service or assistance which enables unpaid carers to have regular and sufficient periods away from their caring routines or responsibilities. The purpose is to support the caring relationship and promote the health and well-being of the unpaid carer, the supported person, and other family members affected.

The Short Breaks Services Statement for Unpaid Adult Carers sets out in more detail what a short break is and how a short break can support unpaid carers.

Short breaks can take any number of forms and can also be for extended periods. Short breaks should be personalised to meet the unpaid carer's needs and be planned around what matters to them.

ScotSpirit Holiday Voucher Scheme

The VisitScotland ScotSpirit Holiday Voucher Scheme, funded by Scottish Government, forms part of the Scottish tourism pandemic recovery programme. The scheme offers a contribution towards a holiday stay in hotels, campsites, bed and breakfasts or day visit activities in Scotland.

The Scheme focused on supporting unpaid carers affected by the pandemic, while at the same time providing financial support to the Scottish tourism sector.

The Renfrewshire scheme was administered by the Carers Centre, supported by the HSCP, and 93 unpaid carers in Renfrewshire got a break.

Examples of short breaks include:

- Traditional holiday type short breaks, often overnight away from caring situation.
- Receiving services e.g., massage, alternative therapies.
- Requiring equipment e.g., computers / tablets.
- Receiving space e.g., a shed or a greenhouse.
- Receiving time e.g., driving lessons to shorten time to the caring role.

In our consultation, only 37% of carers said that someone had spoken to them about getting a short break from caring.

Delivering on Priority 2

Unpaid carers get a break from caring

High-Level Priority Activity	Outcome	Measure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support unpaid carers to access a break from caring. Help unpaid carers understand what short breaks are available, how they can be accessed and any eligibility criteria that apply. 	<p>People who provide unpaid care are supported to look after their own health and wellbeing, including to reduce any negative impact of their caring role on their own health and wellbeing</p>	<p>Number of short break hours provided.</p>

Case Study: Supporting Unpaid Carers to Access Innovative Short Breaks Options

As COVID restrictions eased during 2021, the HSCP, the Carers Centre and OneRen initiated a carer's passport pilot across OneRen facilities, supporting unpaid carers to access leisure facilities free for a 12-week period, beginning in October 2021. 77 carers signed up to the initial pilot and agreed to share their experience.

Due to the continuing COVID restrictions, several of the participants were unable to make full use of the initiative, and some felt that they were not able to continue participating in the pilot. It was therefore agreed that the pilot would be extended to 30 June 2022 to facilitate the 39 unpaid carers who expressed an interest in continuing. OneRen, the Carers Centre, and the HSCP are currently working on an evaluation of the pilot, which will inform the development of the passport as well as wider work to support carers to get a break from caring.

"What a wonderful, life changing experience the Carers' Passport scheme trial has been for me. Due to my daughter's illness, I picked up a lot of weight being isolated at home and stress eating. I became unwell myself and my mental health was in a very bad state. I now really understand the positive effect exercise has on mental health and have found that elusive fitness bug that I never understood before. The potential for healing is quite amazing."

Unpaid Carer - Carers Passport Pilot

Priority 3

Unpaid carers are recognised and valued as equal partners in care and involved in decision making relating to their caring role

Equal Partners

When HSCP staff are planning and delivering care for the cared-for person, it's important that the unpaid carer is involved so they can provide their expert knowledge. Any decisions about the cared-for person's care will also have an impact on the unpaid carer.

In Renfrewshire, unpaid carers are involved at all levels of our organisation. At a strategic level, there is unpaid carer representation on the Integration Joint Board, the Strategic Planning Group and across our different care group planning structures. The HSCP also has a dedicated Carers Planning Group. HSCP staff ensure that unpaid carers are involved in decisions about the cared-for person. Unpaid carers are also supported to represent local unpaid carers at Council, Community Planning, NHS and national meetings.

The HSCP recognises that this involvement will improve partnership working across services and will work with partners to continue to support unpaid carers to be involved in decisions which affect them and the person they care for.

Working in Partnership in Hospital Settings

One example the consultation with unpaid carers highlighted was the cared-for person's hospital journey. The consultation also heard from key staff involved in supporting unpaid carers during this time.

The feedback highlighted two areas for development:

- The links between staff based in hospitals and Renfrewshire Carers Centre to keep up to date with the support available to unpaid carers.
- The support pathways for unpaid carers when the person they care for begins their patient journey.

55% said they were involved in the hospital discharge planning for the person they care for.

18% said they had been asked if they were a carer when the cared for person was in hospital.

Delivering on Priority 3

Unpaid carers are recognised and valued as equal partners in care and involved in decision making relating to their caring role

High-Level Priority Activity	Outcome	Measure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide our staff with the training, information and support to support carers in decision making • Provide regular updates to staff on unpaid carer support. • Support Unpaid Carer representatives to attend relevant meetings and fora. • Support Unpaid Carer representatives to hear from the wider unpaid carer population, and feedback. • Where appropriate, support unpaid carers to access advocacy. • Provide unpaid carer Awareness sessions for people who live and work in Renfrewshire. • Publicise and promote the national Carers' Charter, so that unpaid carers and staff understand carers' rights under the Carers Act. • Work with senior HSCP and NHS GGC managers to develop improved pathways for unpaid carers. • Develop a Renfrewshire Unpaid Carers Forum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The voices of unpaid carers are heard, and their views and experiences are considered in decisions which affect them. • Practitioners, managers, local organisations, and the wider public are more aware of unpaid carers, the rationale for supporting them, and their rights under the Carers Act 	<p>Number of unpaid carers saying they feel supported to continue caring</p>

“Carers should be identified as early as possible on admission of the cared for person and asked about previous history/ anything staff need to know. Accurate information should always be given, and carers kept updated. Consultants should meet carer before discharge and discharge plan discussed and agreed...Carer should be able to stay with (cared for)...especially if they can't speak for themselves. They should be treated with respect and involved in all aspects of care. I would have liked to have been given the form that is "all about me" to fill in for my husband instead of me having to ask. It made such a big difference to his mental state and recovery. His own wheelchair should have been there too as I was anxious leaving him in case he fell going to the toilet.” **Unpaid Carer - Hospital Experience**

Priority 4

Unpaid carers are supported on a consistent basis to allow them to continue caring, if that is their wish, in good health and wellbeing, allowing for a life of their own outside of caring.

Health Inequalities

Unpaid carers who provide high levels of care are more likely to be in poor health. In addition, more unpaid carers took on intensive caring roles during the pandemic. Our consultation showed that 63% of unpaid carers are providing 100+ hours of care each week. The consultation also found that 68% of unpaid carers said they had a mental or physical health condition or illness, which is higher than the national figure of 41%, and higher than the figure for the general population of Renfrewshire (31%).

Identifying unpaid carers is crucial to ensure that they get support early, before their health and well-being deteriorates, and ultimately, they are not able to continue to care. It is also important to provide the right support to unpaid carers, whether that is via support groups, counselling, yoga, social groups, or money advice – all these can benefit physical and mental health.

41% said that Caring Commitments were a barrier to accessing support. 21% said Work Commitments, 17% said transport, and 10% said confidence was a barrier.

44% accessed Information and Advice, 15% had accessed Support Groups, 13% accessed training.

Impact of the cost-of-living crisis

A survey carried out by Renfrewshire Carers Centre in 2020, found that 47% had been impacted financially by the pandemic. A more recent survey by Carers Scotland found that 52% of unpaid carers could not afford their monthly expenses. The main financial support for unpaid carers, Carers Allowance, or Scottish Carer's Assistance as it will become known, is administered nationally. However locally, we can ensure those carers who need it most have access to grants and information about what financial support they are entitled to.

In March 2022, the Carers Centre and HSCP worked together to distribute the Scottish Government's Winter Recovery Fund to eligible unpaid carers to help with energy bills and other essentials.

Delivering on Priority 4

Unpaid carers are supported on a consistent basis to allow them to continue caring, if that is their wish, in good health and wellbeing, allowing for a life of their own outside of caring.

High-Level Priority Activity	Outcome	Measure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the ACSP process, ensuring unpaid carers get access to personalised support. Work with unpaid carers and condition specific organisations to develop and deliver support to unpaid carers and the person they look after. Ensure unpaid carers have access to information and advice about what benefits they are entitled to. Continue to access funding to support unpaid carers who need help the most. Provide a range of support to improve unpaid carers physical and mental health and well-being. Review options for providing support at different times of the day. Work with Renfrewshire Council Children's Services to develop a pathway and protocol for young carer to adult carer transition planning, to ensure consistency of support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People who provide unpaid care are supported to look after their own health and wellbeing, including to reduce any negative impact of their caring role on their own health and wellbeing. Unpaid young adult carers are supported when transitioning from education to training and work while balancing an ongoing caring role. 	<p>Number of unpaid carers saying they feel supported to continue caring</p>

"Training in good health and social care practices and condition-specific illnesses has given me the skills to care with confidence. At the start of my caring journey, I completed an unpaid Adult Carers Support Plan self-assessment, which helped me focus on planning for a healthy work life balance in my caring role. When my mum was diagnosed with dementia, Alzheimers Scotland training taught me to understand this illness and apply dementia friendly communication tools and techniques to help us enjoy our time together. As an unpaid carer we have a wealth of lived caring experience plus opportunities to access health and social care training and qualifications to further develop our confidence and skills."

Priority 5

We live in unpaid carer-friendly communities, where unpaid carers' needs and rights are understood, and they are not excluded or discriminated against by virtue of their caring role.

Assessing the impact of the Strategy

We are committed to ensuring that all unpaid carers should have equal access to services and support.

Good health and well-being is not evenly distributed across our communities and unpaid carers are more likely to be affected by poor outcomes. This can be because of a range of factors, including social issues, prejudice and discrimination. The HSCP will do all it can to address these wider issues that cause inequalities in unpaid carers health and well-being.

This strategy will be equality impact assessed and the assessment will be available on the HSCP's [website](#).

"No one wishes to become an unpaid carer, or to have to rely upon them. it's a position that has been imposed on individuals through unfortunate events. Virtually overnight, and after both working a lifetime in full-time employment, my wife and I have gone from having professional careers, to depending on benefits."

Unpaid Carer

Treating unpaid carers with dignity

During the consultation, unpaid carers said they should be treated with **dignity**, when working in partnership with professionals, as well as in terms of access to financial support.



Delivering on Priority 5

We live in unpaid carer-friendly communities, where unpaid carers' needs and rights are understood, and they are not excluded or discriminated against by virtue of their caring role.

High-Level Priority Activity	Outcome	Measure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a 'Renfrewshire Unpaid Carers Card', to provide discounted activities across culture, leisure, and hospitality. • Monitor and review the delivery of the Unpaid Adult Carers strategy. • Ensure that staff are aware of their duties in relation to the Carers Act. • Publicise and promote the national Carers' Charter, so that unpaid carers and staff understand carers' rights under the Carers Act. • Ensure unpaid carers have access to information and advice about what benefits they are entitled to. • Continue to access funding to support unpaid carers who need help the most. • Support unpaid carers to gain a qualification related to health and social care. • Support unpaid carers to access training, further education, and employment. 	<p>That the social and economic contribution, impacts and scale of caring are recognised, understood, and reflected in local policy making across all areas</p>	<p>Number of new unpaid carers supported.</p>

Priority 6

Unpaid Carers have the information, skills, and resources they need to care.

Information

The consultation has highlighted the continued importance of information, with unpaid carers, staff, managers, and the public highlighting it as a key support for unpaid carers. The Carers Act includes a duty to ensure the establishment and maintenance of an information service. The HSCP commissions Renfrewshire Carers Centre to provide an Information Service, including an Information Worker post.

How information is Provided:

The centre provides information in a variety of ways, including:

- Website which averages 3,000 visits per quarter.
- E-bulletin with 2,552 subscribers.
- Social media promoting services and support, key policy changes, and consultations.
- Information for unpaid carers on the HSCP website.

The HSCP and Carers recognise the need to continually update and innovate the way information is provided, especially to encourage new unpaid carers to identify themselves and ask for support.

"Being able to participate on zoom has enabled me to learn new skills that I use whenever I feel stressed and anxious"

Meeting Information Needs through Training

The Carers Centre has offered 282 training courses over 2021/22 to carers. 149 of these were new to the Centre. Training is delivered through a mixture of face-to-face and on-line training and is reviewed regularly to reflect the needs of Carers, as identified through a training needs analysis.

Current training ranges from condition-specific courses such as Dementia, Autism and Mental Health, to practical training such as First Aid, Power of Attorney, Self-Directed Support, Carers Rights and Digital skills. Well-being sessions continue to be popular included relaxation, mindfulness and facial pamper courses.



Delivering on Priority 6

Unpaid Carers have the information, skills, and resources they need to care.

High-Level Priority Activity	Outcome	Measure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce information booklets specific to each caring situation. • Develop innovative ways of providing information, including use of new platforms. • Run regular roadshows in community settings to target unpaid carers. • Update information on the HSCP's website and provide information relevant to each caring situation. • Revisit training programme to make sure it continues to meet the needs of unpaid carers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unpaid carers have the skills, knowledge, and confidence to continue caring. • Unpaid carers can obtain relevant, understandable, and usable advice and information 	<p>Number of unpaid carers saying they feel supported to continue caring</p>



Priority 7

Staff who are Unpaid Carers are Identified and Supported Within the Workplace

Many of the HSCP's staff juggle their unpaid caring responsibilities with working. Balancing work and care can be a real struggle and the HSCP is committed to ensuring that staff who are unpaid carers get the support in the workplace they need.

Research by [Carers UK](#) in 2021, found that in Scotland:

- 70% of working carers have benefitted from home working
- 45% said that home working, flexible working, and paid carers leave helped them juggle work and care.
- 78% said they felt anxious about caring when working.
- 74% of working carers are worried about being able to continue to juggle work and care

HSCP staff are employed by Renfrewshire Council and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. Both are [Carer Positive Employers](#), an award presented to employers in Scotland who have a working environment where carers are valued and supported.

104 Renfrewshire Council staff are registered as Unpaid Carers.



[Renfrewshire Council Carers Leave Policy](#)



[NHSGGC - Information for staff who are unpaid carers](#)

Workforce Plan

The HSCP's Workforce Plan sets out the objectives and supporting actions the HSCP and our partners will seek to deliver to develop a sustainable workforce which provides career choices and opportunities for those who currently work in the sector, and attracts people with a range of experiences and skills to work in health and social care in Renfrewshire.

The Plan includes a specific section on unpaid carers in recognition of the critical role they have in supporting health and social care.

Staff Unpaid Carers Story

"I work in the HSCP's Care at Home team. I also care for my child who has a learning disability.

I became aware of the Council's carers leave policy via the staff intranet, which gives me up to one week's paid leave. The leave is flexible, and I don't need to take it all at the same time and this has been a great help."

Delivering on Priority 7

Staff who are unpaid carers are identified and supported within the workplace

High-Level Priority Activity	Outcome	Measure
<p>Provide regular awareness raising sessions to staff and managers in health and social care, on available support for unpaid carers in the community and in the workplace</p> <p>Support employers in Renfrewshire to include unpaid carers within equality, diversity and inclusion policies –</p> <p>Support employers in Renfrewshire to become 'Carer Positive'.</p> <p>Supporting unpaid carers to gain employment, if they so wish.</p> <p>Support employers to include unpaid carers in equalities and diversity monitoring, so that employers can recognise and identify unpaid carers.</p>	<p>People who provide unpaid care are supported to look after their own health and wellbeing, including to reduce any negative impact of their caring role on their own health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Number of unpaid carers saying they feel supported to continue caring.</p> <p>Number of employers in Renfrewshire who are Carer Positive.</p>

What those managing staff told us

The main challenges in supporting our staff who are unpaid carers

- Striking the right balance between supporting staff and providing a service.
- No awareness of available support.
- Lack of information about the support that is available.
- We need to ensure there is wider awareness of the Carers Leave Policy, that it is applied consistently, and we consider how we do this with current staffing pressures.
- Consider additional action we can take to better support staff.
- Training or briefings for staff and managers on available support/ Carers Leave Policy.
- Reassure staff Carers Leave Policy is an entitlement – do not feel guilty requesting.
- Access to money and debt advice.



Delivering our Strategy

Delivering our Strategy in Partnership

The Carers Act included a duty to set eligibility criteria to determine whether unpaid carers have eligible needs. In its Eligibility Criteria for Unpaid Adult Carers, the IJB agreed that when unpaid carers have **critical or substantial** needs, there is a **duty to support**, e.g., more traditional formal breaks arranged by HSCP Locality Teams, and when unpaid carers have **moderate or low** needs there is a **power to support**, e.g., commissioned support from Renfrewshire Carers Centre. All unpaid carers can access Information and Advice.

The HSCP works with its partners in health and social care to support unpaid carers who have critical or substantial needs and works with the Carers Centre and other partners in the voluntary sector to support unpaid carers who have moderate or low needs.

HSCP Locality Teams

Unpaid carers can request an Adult Carer Support Plan from a Locality Team, where they will get the opportunity to discuss what services and support they need. If an unpaid carer has eligible needs, the Locality Team will arrange appropriate support based on the level of need.

HSCP Unpaid Adult Carers Post

The Head of Strategic Planning and Health Improvement is the HSCP's lead for unpaid adult carers and is supported by a post funded by Scottish Government Carers Act Funding. The duties of the post include work to support:

- The partnership with Renfrewshire Carers Centre.
- The development and implementation of strategic documents.
- The implementation of the duties in the Carers Act.

Renfrewshire Council Children's Services

The HSCP has responsibility for supporting adult unpaid carers and Renfrewshire Council Children's Services has responsibility for supporting young carers. The HSCP works with Renfrewshire Council's Children's Services recognising that many young carers are caring for adults and also to ensure a smooth transition to adult support as they become of age.

Hospital Settings

The HSCP's team at the Royal Alexandra Hospital works in partnership with hospital staff to support unpaid carers during the cared-for person's hospital journey. The team also supports the identification of unpaid carers in hospitals.

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Corporate Carers Group

The group brings carer leads and Carers Centre managers from across the NHSGGC area together to develop initiatives to better support unpaid carers in acute settings.

Delivering our Strategy in Partnership

Commissioning the Renfrewshire Carers Centre



The HSCP commissions Renfrewshire Carers Centre to develop and deliver support to unpaid carers. Commissioned support includes:

Information and advice	Completion of Adult Carer Support Plans	Emergency Planning	Counselling
Mental health support	Young carers support and activity groups	Newsletters	Activity based classes and support groups
Training	Advocacy	Respite	Individual Support
Support with volunteering	Development and Partnership Working	Reaching Hidden Carers	Health and Wellbeing

At the time of writing, work was underway to put in place a new three-year contract with the Centre and the feedback from the consultation will inform what services and support the Centre will provide.

These will also align with the priorities in the strategy. The HSCP and the Carers Centre will regularly ask unpaid carers if the services and support being provided are the right ones to help manage their caring role, and to support them through other challenges such as the cost-of-living crisis.

Delivering our Strategy in Partnership

Commissioning the Renfrewshire Carers Centre

The Carers Centre provide valuable support, and on many occasions are considered a lifeline by unpaid carers. The Centre continually looks for ways to improve the support available. Key commitments the Carers Centre will progress over the life of this strategy include:

- A shortened version of the Adult Carers Support Plan to make it easier to complete.
- Establish Carer Ambassadors throughout Renfrewshire.
- Work with colleges to help Carers to gain qualifications for their caring role.
- Develop digital opportunities to support and identify new Carers such as WhatsApp groups; a new, interactive website
- Establish a short breaks bureau
- Develop Carer Awareness Training for all volunteers
- Work with organisations and communities to identify and support carers from hard-to-reach communities.
- Develop information days on issues affecting carers, such as finance / energy workshops and looking after yourself.
- Improve the transition from Young Carers to Young Adult Carers and then to Adult Carers services within the Centre.



"I cannot say enough about the help I received since I was put in touch with RCC not just emotionally but financially. With their help, I have managed to get a new sofa and cooker, this wouldn't have been possible without their help."

"As a carer I so appreciate all the care & attention you give to us all."

Delivering our Strategy in Partnership

Third Sector Unpaid Carers Partnership

Most third sector organisations will be supporting unpaid carers, even if they do not provide unpaid carer specific services.

As part of work to develop new support for unpaid carers across the voluntary sector, the Strategic Planning Group created a carers subgroup to develop a carers partnership.

The partnership will support developing carer friendly communities across Renfrewshire.



Shaping Services Through Unpaid Carers Voices and Experience

Unpaid carers interact with a wide range of health & care services and their experience of this, and supporting the people they care for, means that they have a key role in shaping local services. Unpaid Carers are represented at all levels of our organisation in Renfrewshire including the Integration Joint Board and the Strategic Planning Group.

Care Planning Groups: these groups have a dual role; acting as a consultation group for the development of strategic plans, and undertaking Joint Strategic Needs Assessments for each Care Group. In addition to the dedicated Carers Planning Group, carers are also represented across the planning group structure providing them with the opportunity to feed in the broad carer viewpoint.

Carers Forum: the Carers Centre have been commissioned to develop a Carers Forum. The Forum will provide an opportunity for unpaid carers' representatives to feed back to the wider unpaid carer community, and for the wider unpaid carer community to feed into the planning structure.

Improving outcomes for unpaid carers

How the elements of our Strategy fit together

Support unpaid carers to continue caring and have a life alongside caring role

Identification and personalised support at an early stage

Reduce strain and stress on unpaid carers

Reduce likelihood of unpaid carer's health problems and breakdown of caring relationship

Case Study:

Mrs T is a 77 year old woman who cares for her 85 year old husband. He was diagnosed with Alzheimer's and Vascular Dementia following assessment at the Older People's Community Mental Health Team. He also has Angina and heart failure experiences. Mrs T became aware of the Renfrewshire Carers Centre through her husband's Post-Diagnostic Dementia Link Worker.

Mrs T submitted a grant application for a short break to enable her to have raised beds made in her garden. The grant met the costs of materials, labour, and plants. Mr and Mrs T both enjoy gardening, but due to a decline in Mr T's health, this was becoming more difficult. Mrs T was concerned that her husband was feeling excluded from the hobby he loved, and she also views her garden as "her place of respite for time alone".

Three raised beds have now been installed, which are fully accessible to them. Mrs T is aware of the degenerative condition of her husband's illness and the limit this places on his life expectancy. Mrs T is planning the planting of the beds carefully as she wants it to reflect on their time spent together, and will be her place of solace when her husband is no longer with her.

The case study is a good example of how voluntary, community and statutory organisations work together to support unpaid carers. The Carer was identified early and signposted to the Carers Centre. Access to support in the community was provided, as was support for physical and emotional wellbeing. The couple were also supported to access short breaks funding.

Reduce pressure on NHS and Local Authorities

Unpaid carer supported and caring relationship sustained

Better outcomes for unpaid carers, and they feel supported

Better outcomes for the cared-for person

Delivering and Monitoring our Strategy

Measuring the Impact of our Strategy

The Unpaid Adult Carers Planning Group will oversee the implementation of this strategy on behalf of the HSCP. The Group will produce annual delivery plans aligned our priority actions, ensuring our commitments are delivered upon and our objectives are met.

The Group will look to continually review data sources and agree a suite of measures that can be used to determine the impact of the strategy. This will also include ongoing progress monitoring, and consideration of where any potential wider societal or policy changes which may need to be reflected during the strategy's 3-year lifespan.

The Group sits within the HSCP's care planning governance structure and will report on the priority activities relating to carers within the HSCP's Strategic Plan. This ensures performance against agreed local and national performance indicators are monitored and reported on. The local priority activities within Renfrewshire HSCP's Strategic Plan are shown below:

Build unpaid carer-friendly communities across Renfrewshire so that unpaid carers can access the support they need to continue to care. This will increase the number of unpaid carers being identified by a wide-reaching awareness and development programme with our services, acute and community health partners, the voluntary sector and communities, and run campaigns targeting communities of unpaid carers less well known to us.

Review the Unpaid Carer Short Breaks Services Statement and strengthen the partnership approach to supporting unpaid carers to access personalised breaks from caring, using innovative ways to achieve positive outcomes, and sustain carers in the essential support they provide.

Unpaid Carer Performance Indicators	2021/22 Value	Target 2022/23
Number of new unpaid carers	963	913
Number of Adult Carer Support Plans completed	148	145
Number of Unpaid Carers accessing training	282	257